

Get fit for your first 5km road race in 5 weeks

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Are you planning on running a road race this year, but you get discouraged because you can barely get out of bed without losing your breath?



The poster features the Medihelp Sunrise Monster 2024 logo on the left. The main text reads: **ENTRIES ARE OPEN!**, **Saturday, 2 March 2024**, **RUNNING/WALKING**, and **Get moving @ sunrise**. Below this, it states: "Medihelp is an authorised financial services provider (FSP No 15738)". On the right, there is a graphic of a runner in a blue singlet and shorts, running on a green circular path. Above the runner is a clock icon with "Start 6:03". To the right of the runner is "10km/h". Below the runner is a flame icon with "450 Kcal" and a heart rate icon with "75". At the bottom, there are four green boxes with white text: **5 KM**, **10 KM**, **21 KM**, and **32 KM**.

We have good news for you! You can tackle a 5km road race in just 5 weeks, even if you're not exercising at all.

According to Adele Lubbe, senior marketing manager at Medihelp, it's easier to start exercising for a 5km road race than you think: "A mountain quickly becomes a molehill when you start slowly and build your strength and fitness day by day.

"Medihelp has compiled a free exercise programme to help people who would like to get fit. It's been set up in such a way that even someone who has never been a runner can use it. The programme is available on our website at [Medihelp Sunrise Monster](#)," says Lubbe.

Here are five top tips to undertake your first 5km road race:

1. Begin by alternating jogging and walking continuously for 30 minutes daily. This combination will avoid injuries while you get used to exercising. Start with 15 seconds of jogging and 45 seconds of walking. As you get fitter, shorten the time you walk and lengthen the time you jog.
2. Plan your exercise for the week around your daily schedule. You need to jog at least three days a week and do moderate exercise of your choice two days a week. Cycle or swim for 30 minutes or, if you're up to it, do exercises to strengthen your muscles. Use your body weight, weight machines, resistance bands, and weights to develop your muscle strength. Rest one day a week so your muscles get a chance to recover.
3. Jog a bit further each time. As you get fitter, it will get easier to jog faster and, as a result, jog further in the 30 minutes. To be well prepared for a 5 km road race, aim to jog 4 km in 30 to 40 minutes.
4. Eat healthy food like wholegrain products, fresh fruit, and vegetables and drink enough water. A wholegrain breakfast will ensure that you have the energy to exercise for longer. But if you're in a hurry, a banana is a healthy, natural source of energy. If you exercise later in the day, energy bars can provide the necessary boost to help you power through.
5. Eat enough protein. A person who exercises needs more protein than someone who doesn't exercise. Fill your fridge and pantry with lean meat, like chicken and fish, as well as low-fat dairy products and plant-based protein like beans and lentils. Be prepared for unplanned hunger throughout the day by stocking up on healthy snacks like fresh berries,

hummus with veggie sticks, biltong without fat, and nuts.

If you follow these steps, you should be ready for a road race in just over a month.

And even if you are not 100% to run yet, you can still enter the Medihelp Sunrise Monster that takes place on 2 March 2024 in Groenkloof, Pretoria.

Every year, the Medihelp Sunrise Monster attracts more than 6,000 participants from all over Gauteng and neighbouring provinces. It is one of the most popular conditioners for the Comrades Marathon. Distances include a 5km fun run and 10km, 21km and 32km races. Entry fees range from as little as R60 for the 5km to R300 for the 32km.

For more information about the [Medihelp Sunrise Monster](#) website.

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